

Group Revising and Editing using the 6-Traits (plus Sentence Patterns)

The purpose for this activity: An author has the opportunity to listen in on a conversation about his/her writing. Listening to the comments and confusions of readers allows the author to 'see' the strengths and weaknesses of the piece.

Directions:

- Form a group of 3-4 students.
- Select a paper written by one of the group members. (Each person needs a copy of the paper.)
- Read the paper aloud (someone other than the author).
- After the reading, the group discusses a selected number of the following questions. (It is recommended that the author select one or two traits for the group to discuss.)
- It is **critical that the author does not talk during the reading or the discussion**. The author should take notes on the ideas and suggestions from the group members. After all, if the author has to explain what he/she means in the paper, the writing is not working!
- The readers should address each other during the discussion, not the author.
- Again, the author must take notes while the other group members converse.
- At the conclusion of a 3-5 minute conversation between the group members (excluding the author), the author may speak and ask clarifying questions.

Ideas and Content

1. What is the main idea of the paper?
2. What are the supporting points or examples? Are they clear?
3. Do all the supporting points or examples clearly connect to the main idea?
4. Are there any confusing sections?

Organization

1. What is the organizational structure of the paper?
2. Does the organization work for the topic?
3. Are there clear and smooth connections and transitions, among the ideas, sentences, and paragraphs?
4. Is there a clear and inviting introduction that draws in the reader?
5. Is there a strong conclusion that leaves the reader satisfied or with something to think about?

Voice

1. Is the voice appropriate for the topic, audience, and purpose? (1st, 2nd, or 3rd person POV? Voice is personal for a narrative, objective for a research report, etc.)
2. Does the writing show a deep sense of involvement with the topic?
3. Does the writing come to life in an appropriate way for the topic? If not, how could the voice be improved?

Word Choice

1. Are there any misused words?
2. Does the paper avoid clichés and overused expressions?
3. Are there any words that could be replaced with more accurate, powerful, or specific words?

4. Are there words that could be eliminated to improve clarity?

Sentence Fluency

1. Are there any sentences that force the reader to slow down or reread because they are unclear, awkward, or choppy?
2. Are there a variety of sentence lengths and patterns?
3. Could any sentences be combined?
4. Are there any run-on sentences or sentence fragments?
5. Could any clauses or phrases be eliminated to improve clarity?

Conventions

1. Are there any problems with spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, or usage?
2. Are paragraphs used correctly?
3. Is a variety of punctuation used: commas, semi-colons, apostrophes, colons, etc.?

Sentence Patterns:

1. You must include at least one sentence pattern in your paper. Identify your sentence pattern, and ask the group to verify its accuracy.